

In the Snack-bar
Edwin Morgan

1. How does the poet's persona become aware of the old man?
2. How is the old man perceived/described in the first verse?
3. *"The dismal hump looming over him forces his head down. / He stands in his stained beltless gaberdine I like a monstrous animal caught in a tent / in some story"*
Consider the imagery used by the poet in the extract and explain how it conveys the old man's lack of dignity. Give as detailed an explanation as you can.
4. What does the detail of the old man's stick add to our image/understanding of him?
5. Is there any significance in the fact that we cannot see his face?
6. *"Long blind, hunchback born, half paralysed he stands"*

Consider the lines above and explain how the way in which they are laid out contributes to their dramatic impact.

7. When he speaks the old man alters the relationship between himself and the poet's persona. Explain this idea.
8. Why are there no social niceties on the part of the old man when he asks to go to the toilet?
- 9 a. Geddes Thomson refers to what happens in the second verse as "a remarkable change, in which the observer identifies with the man and his life". Explain how the language conveys this change.
- 9 b. This is an example of Morgan's compassion. Apart from helping the old man to get to the toilet, how is Morgan showing compassion within the poem at this point? (Consider **point of view**)
10. Morgan's Snackbar is described in detail. Consider which of the senses are employed in this description and comment on his choice at this point in the poem.
11. Is there any contrast in the description of the toilet and old man?
12. How does the description of the old man's fingers help to convey his vulnerability. Consider also the word "roar" used to describe the drier.
13. Look at the lines *"And slowly we go down. And slowly we go down"* *"He climbs, and steadily enough. / He climbs, we climb. He climbs"* *"And slowly we go down. And slowly we go down."* How does repetition and rhythm add to what is being described?
14. The poet's persona reflects on things he cannot be sure of, things he does not witness in the third verse. What is positive and what is optimistic about this verse?

15. "Dear Christ, to be born for this!" What is meant by this closing statement and who is he referring to?